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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [ML](#) [AG](#)

SUBJECT: MFA SAYS TRIPARTITE NORTHERN MALI SECURITY TALKS
"PREMATURE"

REF: A. SECSTATE 71472

[1](#)B. ALGIERS 704

[1](#)C. BAMAKO 624

[1](#)D. BAMAKO 558

Classified By: CDA, a.i. Thomas F. Daughton for reasons 1.4 (b, d).

[1](#)1. (C) MFA Director General (A/S equivalent) for Africa Lounes Magramane told Charge on July 15 that although Algeria and the U.S. were on the same wavelength regarding the establishment of special security units in northern Mali, setting up a tripartite meeting in August involving Mali, Algeria and the U.S. was "premature." Magramane began his job this week with the departure of his predecessor, Ismail Chergui. Though he apologized for the delay in responding to our meeting request by saying he was in the early stages of setting up his office, he appeared fully informed of the substance of the June 18 meetings with the interagency delegation led by AF DAS Moss (ref B).

[1](#)2. (C) Magramane said that the time was now right for what the GOA considered to be the next step: a meeting in Algiers involving the Algerian government, the Malian government and the 23 May Tuareg Alliance. He expected this to happen as soon as this week, noting that the positive results of talks with the two separate delegations in June (ref C) had set the stage for the next meeting to occur. Magramane said those discussions (with a Malian government delegation and a Tuareg delegation) reassured the GOA that that the two sides were re-engaged on the Algiers Accords and were ready for a three-way meeting in Algiers.

[1](#)3. (C) Magramane observed that the creation of the special joint Malian-Tuareg security units in northern Mali was important, but was just one element of the Algiers Accord undertakings. Algeria was seeking to have all the undertakings implemented. Magramane said he believed the Malian government was "resigned to accepting" the units, but that neither side was yet ready to discuss the details of establishing, training and supporting them. He noted that after the next meeting in Algiers, he would consult with the parties concerned, including the U.S. If all parties were in agreement, he said, Algeria would then steer the process towards the creation of the security units. It was thus too early, he said, to commit to the August meeting we proposed.

[1](#)4. (C) COMMENT: Magramane identified the Algerian ambassador in Bamako (who he said would return to Algiers July 16 or 17) as the designated GOA mediator in the ongoing negotiation effort. Megramane appeared fairly confident that the GOA

would succeed in setting up a three-party meeting with the Malians and the Tuaregs in the coming days, but was cautious about making any commitment for action beyond that. We will monitor developments in that respect and renew the suggestion of an Algeria-Mali-U.S. meeting when opportune. End Comment.

REGIONAL SECURITY SUMMIT

15. (C) Asked about the regional security summit proposed by Malian President Toure (ref D), Magramane said that the mid-July timeframe had slipped and the conference might now occur "during Ramadan." Toure was still working on putting the summit together, he explained. Algeria wanted to see the summit focused on regional security from a counter-terrorism angle, but added that not all the prospective participants yet viewed the proposal from the same standpoint. For example, he said, Niger (where Magramane was Algerian ambassador from 2003-2006) still had a different perspective on Sahel security. Similarly, he said, President Toure was probably more focused on securing Malian territory than on joint CT efforts. Magramane added that Algeria wanted the summit to have "the right participants." He expected it ultimately to involve Algeria, Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad, Libya and "perhaps Burkina Faso" -- "in other words," he said, "the countries of the Sahara." Minimize considered.
DAUGHTON